

Senior property tax relief

Good news! Nearly all of my ideas for expanding senior property-tax relief are included in the senior property-tax legislation that was signed into law. The new law makes about 40,000 additional senior and retiree households eligible for property-tax relief. Major changes:

- 1 We raised the top household income ceiling for senior property-tax relief from \$30,000 to \$35,000.
- 2 Seniors can now deduct costs for Medicare insurance premiums when calculating eligibility for property-tax relief.
- 3 Costs for boarding homes and adult family homes can also now be deducted.

I described the need to enact these three proposals in my Fall, 2003 report to area seniors. One idea I proposed that was not included in the new law would have allowed veterans' disability payments to be deducted when calculating eligibility for the tax-relief program.

I'll keep working on the veterans' disability deduction. The federal government allows similar deductions, and it is an appropriate way to help deserving seniors while honoring service to our country.

Looking ahead ...

Although this was a successful legislative session, much work remains ahead to improve the economy and create jobs in South King County.

- We need to keep and create good paying jobs by eliminating incentives to export our local jobs to countries overseas.
- We need to make health care more affordable by allowing inexpensive prescription drugs to be imported from Canada.
- We need to invest in education by reforming our school finance system to improve accountability and drive more dollars into the classroom.

As I work on developing these ideas into legislation, I would welcome your input, feedback and suggestions. I remain committed to working together on real solutions to the economic challenges facing families, seniors and others in South King County.

For further information about Washington's Senior Property-tax Relief Program, please contact the King County Assessor's office: (206) 296-3920



Representative Dave Upthegrove

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Representative Dave Upthegrove 2004 Legislative Wrap-Up

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

I'm honored to serve as your State Representative, and hope you'll take a few moments to look through this final report on the 2004 legislative session. I took an independent balanced approach that put our community's concerns ahead of partisan politics.

Since the session was only 60 days long, I focused my time and energy on steps to create jobs and improve our economy in South King County. I supported real solutions to economic challenges facing average folks, including:

- Investing in education (schools and colleges) — the best way to ensure future prosperity
- Making health care more affordable for individuals and businesses.
- Creating and keeping good-paying jobs by supporting local economic development.

Inside, you'll find five steps I successfully took to help create jobs and improve the economy in South King County. The back page describes a major expansion of senior citizen property-tax relief I supported which passed into law, as well as a look ahead to next session.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to write, call or email. I value the input I receive and hope you'll share your thoughts with me.

Sincerely,

Dave Upthegrove

Dave Upthegrove
State Representative
33rd Legislative District

Five successes to create jobs and improve the economy

2004
Legislative Wrap-Up

Representative
Dave Upthegrove

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Five local successes to create jobs and improve our economy

1 Highline Community College

A top personal priority this year was keeping the new Higher Education Center at Highline Community College on track for its grand opening in fall, 2005, so that local students can earn four-year degrees on the Highline campus. Despite the tight budget, I helped secure \$2.5 million to equip the new laboratories and classrooms. The Higher Education Center is a partnership between Highline C.C. and Central Washington University to boost the South King County economy by coordinating undergraduate and graduate-level education tailored to high-demand jobs. The budget also provides \$550,000 in emergency funds to provide desperately-needed additional parking on the campus.



2 Local Streams and wetlands

In order to have good jobs and a strong economy, we need to keep South King County a great place to live. When the Port of Seattle (which runs SeaTac Airport) muscled a bill through the Senate to exempt airports from crucial laws protecting streams and wetlands, I successfully helped block passage of the bill in the House. Streams, wetlands and the wildlife they sustain are important to our environment and the quality of life that attracts business and jobs to South King County. Our community deserves the same environmental protections as the rest of the state.



3 Kent employment program

When a proposed state policy threatened to cut state funding for employment programs for people with developmental disabilities, SKCAC Industries of Kent risked losing all state funding. Not only does SKCAC employ 90 people in Kent to package and assemble materials, but an additional 50 to 60 businesses also rely on SKCAC services to get products to market.

I'm proud I was able to help straighten the issue out and that state funding will continue to help SKCAC, its workers and the local businesses who depend on them.



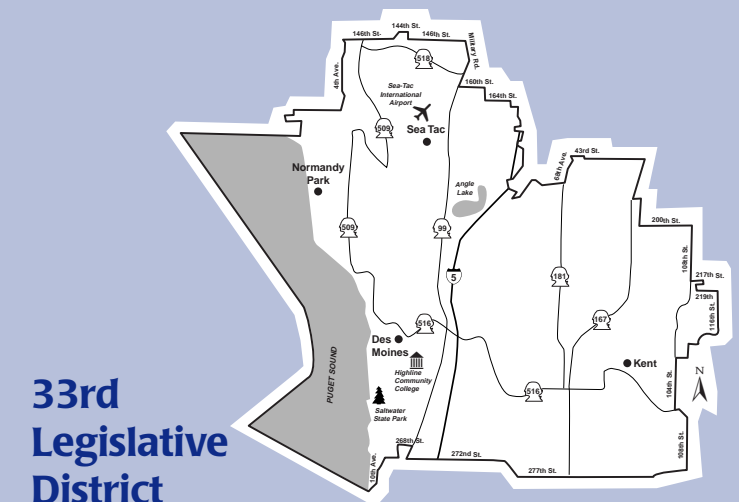
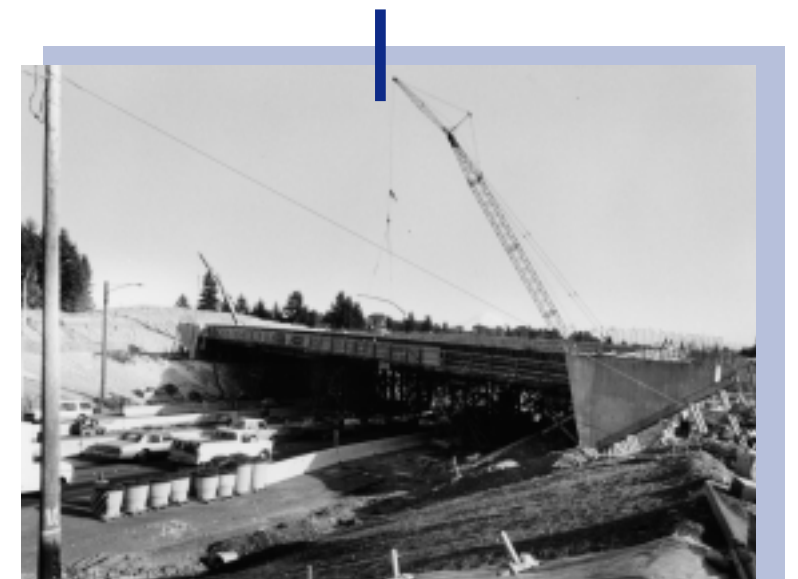
4 Faster economic development

Thanks to support from the Association of Washington Business and the City of Kent, my proposal for faster state Growth Management Act reviews of many types of local economic development projects passed the Legislature nearly unanimously. This new law will save local governments time and money by avoiding needless delays to economic development projects that pose no risks to the environment.



5 A corridor for Kent commerce

Creating a major east-west transportation link through Kent's industrial area (at 228th St.) is a top priority of the Kent Chamber of Commerce and many local businesses. I'm pleased to report that I was able to help secure \$2 million for the project, which will speed up traffic and help Kent businesses move goods out of the Valley more efficiently. We also landed a \$5 million loan for Des Moines' Pacific Highway South Redevelopment Project to improve the roadway, intersections, crosswalks, bus shelters, and lighting.



33rd
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